

San Diego National Wildlife Refuge
SAN DIEGO, CA

Case Study

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ROLLGLASS

San Diego National Wildlife Refuge Project

The San Diego National Wildlife Refuge is a recently constructed \$4.9 million, 8,000-square-foot complex that includes an administrative headquarters, visitor's center, and service facility/laboratory. It is located within Sweetwater Marsh, the last remaining saltwater marsh habitat in southern California.

The new facility consolidates functions previously spread across four off-site buildings, and provides Fish and Wildlife Service staff with offices and collaboration areas in which they can now perform their work within the marsh.

SD Wildlife National Refuge Design Rationale

Project architect Johnny Birkinbine, AIA, of Line and Space, LLC, explains that the overall design rationale for the interior was to keep everything light and open. "We wanted to give both staff and visitors a strong connection to the landscape by providing plenty of light and openness within the facility," he states.

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One way the design team achieved its goal was the use of Rollglass interior sliding glass door systems from Klein USA as partition walls between the staff's offices and the corridors. The same system was also used on the conference room. Long popular in Europe, the simple yet sophisticated system is designed to divide interior spaces with a glass wall comprised of both fixed and moveable frameless panels.

"The use of floor-to-ceiling glass walls provided us with the transparency we wanted in order to provide the staff with views of the exterior," Birkinbine states. "They also allow plenty of natural daylight to penetrate the interior of the building, once again connecting the staff with the exterior."

Frameless Design

Birkinbine explains that one of the main reasons the Klein system was chosen was its frameless design. "We wanted as much natural light as possible to penetrate into the space," he says. "This not only provided the feeling of openness we desired, but also minimized the need for conventional lighting, resulting in significant energy savings."

The glass partition walls also helped the facility attain LEED Gold – New Construction certification. According to Birkinbine, the ability of the glass walls to extend natural daylight deep into the interior of the space helped increase energy efficiency and contributed to the "Daylight and Views" credit.

Another design element that appealed to Birkinbine was the lack of a track on the doorway floor. The sliding panel is ceiling mounted, resulting in a clear passageway with no floor profile. "We were looking for the cleanest installation possible," the architect notes. "The absence of a floor track was an added plus because it eliminated any need to recess it."

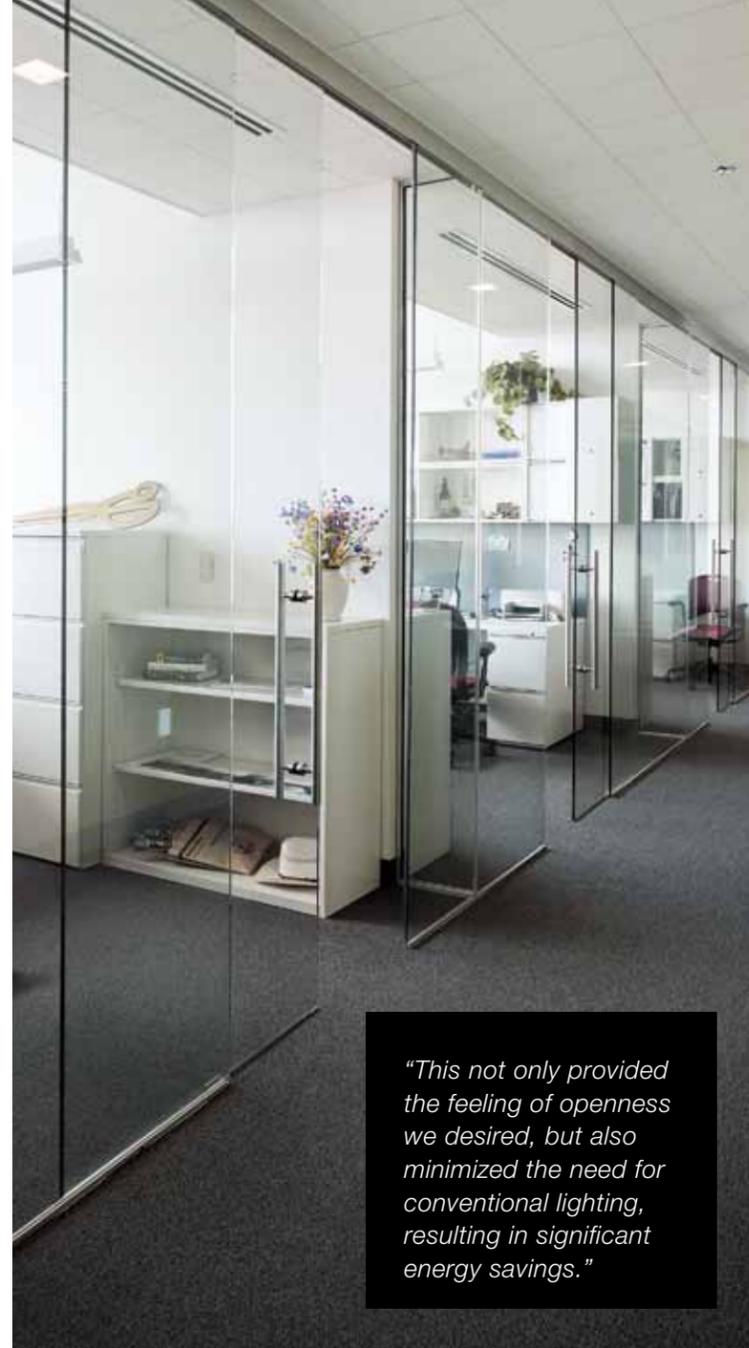
"We wanted the office fronts to function as dividers, but we also wanted them to disappear."

Clean, Crisp Visual

"We wanted the office fronts to function as dividers, but we also wanted them to disappear," he continues. "The use of glass offered us a clean, crisp, contemporary visual that also provided transparency, views, and plenty of natural light."

He also notes the use of a short, 90° glass panel return between the glass office front and the drywall partition that separates offices. "If we had extended the drywall all the way out to the corridor wall, we would have broken the rhythm of the glass plane and also lost some of the transparency we were looking for," he states.

Even though this was the first time Birkinbine used frameless interior sliding glass doors, it may not be the last. "We had both aesthetic and environmental goals in the design of this project as we do in all our projects, and the Klein system helped us achieve them," he says. "As a result, we would consider using it again whenever appropriate."



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Architect:
Line and Space, LLC

Installer:
Sun Pacific Glazing, Inc

Photographer:
Mike Torrey

Installation Application

The Wildlife Refuge Complex also marked the first experience with Klein frameless interior sliding glass doors for William Gordon, Project Manager for Sun Pacific Glazing, Inc.

Even though it was his initial installation, Gordon reports everything went smoothly. "What we especially liked was the minimal number of parts. We hardly needed the installation instructions. Overall, the installation was quick and easy. And, as a result, would recommend the system again."



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